

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

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Governor, First Lady Announce Round Two of School Breakfast Grants

HELENA – Governor Steve Bullock and First Lady Lisa Bullock announced today that the Montana No Kid Hungry program is opening the second round of school breakfast grants to support the implementation of new school breakfast programs or to assist schools in moving to a *Breakfast after the Bell* model. Through this grant cycle, they will award \$52,500. Grant award funds were contributed by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Montana, Walmart, AT&T, and Share Our Strength/No Kid Hungry. In the first grant cycle, released in the fall of 2014, twenty schools across Montana received grants totaling \$55,000. All grant funding comes from private business donations.

"There are many reasons why Montana children skip breakfast--limited food budgets, challenges with early work schedules and transportation—through these grants and our community partnerships, we're able to ensure students get a healthy breakfast every morning that will help them succeed in the classroom." Governor Bullock said. "Childhood hunger in Montana is an important issue, an issue that we're making great progress toward addressing."

Governor Bullock and First Lady Bullock implemented the *Breakfast after the Bell* initiative to increase participation in school breakfast and make it a part of the school day by serving it after the bell. There are creative, low-cost ways to increase school breakfast participation. The Montana No Kid Hungry program is working with superintendents, principals, teachers, school food service directors, parents, and students to implement new ways to serve breakfast, such as offering Breakfast in the Classroom or Grab n' Go options that make breakfast a part of every student's morning schedule. On average, school breakfast participation rises to more than 70 percent when schools implement a Breakfast after the Bell model, versus 30 percent with a traditional model that serves breakfast in the cafeteria before school starts.

Federal nutrition programs such as the School Breakfast Program protect our kids from hunger. These programs also have long-lasting effects on academic achievement and health. Research continues to show that students who skip breakfast generally have lower memory recall, make more errors, and are more likely to be absent or tardy and to repeat a grade. Students who eat breakfast generally have better vitamin and nutrient intake and are less prone to being overweight or obese.

“We must take care of the whole child,” First Lady Lisa Bullock said. “By increasing participation in school breakfast and ensuring that all kids have a healthy start to the day, schools can eliminate one of the barriers learning.”

Schools can apply for grants until February 27th, by visiting grants.nokidhungry.org and entering the access code **MTBREAKFAST2015** (case-sensitive).

For schools interested in starting a new breakfast program and/or making breakfast part of the school day, contact the Montana No Kid Hungry School Breakfast Coordinator, Rosie Cody at RCody@mt.gov or by phone at 444-3925.

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